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PREACHED BY

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SPECIAL NOTICE

TO

SUBSCRIBERS.

Owing to circumstances beyond their control, Messrs. J. B. Ford & Co. were in July obliged to discontinue the publication of Plymouth Pulpit, and that responsibility was assumed by The Christian Union Publishing Company.

From various considerations, it has been deemed best to print Ellinwood's Reports of Mr. Beecher's Sermons hereafter in Mr. Beecher's paper, The Christian Union. This week's issue, therefore, Vol. IV., No. 26, which concludes the present Semi-annual Volume, will be the concluding issue of these Sermons in their present form. After that, they will be continued weekly in The Christian Union, and every subscriber to Plymouth Pulpit will receive his full number of Sermons in that form, being served with the paper week by week until the close of his subscription to the Pulpit. Those who are subscribers to both periodicals will be served with the paper to the full limit of the Plymouth Pulpit subscription, in addition to the limit of their subscription to The Christian Union.

PERFECTION THROUGH LOVE.

I shall ask your attention to a few remarks, based on the 48th verse of the 5th chapter of St. Matthew's Gospel:

"Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect."

Is this an exhortation to perfection, or is it an exhortation to a particular mode of becoming perfect? This passage is not used in the sense in which the term *perfection* has come to be used among many Christians—namely, to signify the rising of men into a state in which they are at perfect peace with God: it is used to signify a particular condition of benevolence—that condition of benevolence which is characteristic of God, and which, if we are to be his children, must be characteristic of us.

The foregoing passages were exhortations on the subject of our relations of temper and feeling to our fellow men:

"Ye have heard that it hath been said [and they could have heard it again, if they had lived in our time], Thou shalt love thy neighbor, and hate thine enemy."

This was on the principle, I suppose, that "half a loaf is better than no bread." People fulfill the last part of this maxim, without taking very much pains about the first part. The art of hatred is very thoroughly developed among mankind. It is one of those graces that does not need much nourishing. It feeds itself. But the art of loving one's neighbor is a different one, inasmuch as most people are not altogether lovely. Anybody can love that which is intrinsically lovely; but nobody, without God's grace in his soul, can love one who is not to some extent lovely. It is mother-love where one loves unlovely things; for a babe is not lovely. It is nothing at first; it is neuter; it is all yet to be: but the

TWIN MOUNTAIN HOUSE, N. H., SUNDAY MORNING, August 29, 1875. HYMNS (Plymouth Collection): Nos. 619, 682, 597

mother discerns wonderful things in the child. There is a love that can love beauty, and nothing else; there is a love that can love excellence, and nothing else; there is a love that can love a being that is without excellence or beauty, and love him into it. There is such a thing as loveliness being developed by love in the object loved. It is Divine love that is here meant. Let me read the next verse. Men and women, you are in danger of losing your souls on this verse more than on any other part of the whole Bible. There are more people that make shipwreck on this passage of Scripture than on any other. The whole shore along here is thick with wrecks.

"I say unto you, love your enemies."

"Oh yes," say many, "if they confess, if they acknowledge their wrong, I will forgive them, and love them." Well, let us read on.

"Bless them that curse you [and while they are cursing], do good to them that hate you [and whose hatred is like burning fire], and pray for them which spitefully use you, and persecute you; that ye may be the children of your Father which is in heaven [that is the spirit which is to make you children of God]: for he maketh his sun to rise on the evil and on the good [on pirates, on murderers, on debauchees; for, though they are corrupt, they are human beings that have eternity before them; and if God does not love them, who shall? and if he does not send kindnesses to win them back, who will?], and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust."

If all farmers had rain according to their personal merits, there would be queer farming abroad; but God sends rain on the just and on the unjust, because by nature as well as by spiritual grace he is seeking perpetually to win men, through gratitude, to service and to obedience of love.

"For if ye love them which love you, what reward have ye?"

Why, that is exchange, dollar for dollar. That is commerce. Anybody can do that.

"Do not even the publicans the same? And if ye salute your brethren only [that is, if you salute those that belong to your church, and that think just as you think, and act just as you act; if you are courteous and kind to your brethren that are in affinity with you], do not even the publicans so? Be ye therefore perfect as [or in the manner in which] your Father which is in heaven is perfect."

And how is that? By the temper of divine benevolence. By the universal vivific and healing power in the heart of

God, he holds the warring race together, and so is building up that coming new heaven and new earth in which is to dwell righteousness; and in this way you are to approve yourselves children of God.

No man is a Christian because he is a professor of religion. No man is a Christian because he has had an experience. No man is a Christian because he loves to go to meeting, because he loves to read his Bible, or because he loves to say his prayers. No man is a Christian who has not the Spirit of Christ; and the Spirit of Christ is a Spirit of beneficence. If you are tender-hearted, if you are gentle, if you are kind, if you are slow to anger, if you are easy to forgive, if you love your enemies, and even those that spitefully use you and persecute you, then you have Christ's spirit, and you belong to God's family; but no matter what church you belong to, or what creed you subscribe to, or what religious services you atttend; no matter what you do—though you give your body to be burned, and give your goods to feed the poor, from ostentation or vanity, or what not—and have not this benevolence, then you are as sounding brass or a tinkling cymbal. So, then, you perceive that the exhortation of our Master is to perfection in a given direction.

Now, perfection suggests what we call *character:* for what we call *character* means simply that condition to which training, whether conscious or unconscious, brings the whole of a man's faculties; but what a man's character is usually depends on the central or dominant faculty in him. A man who loves money more, on the whole, than anything else is avaricious. His character is formed around the predominant feeling in him of love for money. Not that he has not other feelings; he thinks good things and does good things: but the architectural faculty in him, the one that builds him and gives shape to everything in him, is avarice; and that spoils him. No matter how much honey you may find in him, his character is collected about the central element of avarice, and he has a bad character. There are many worthy qualities in him, it may be; but the real *Ego*, the central man, is the selfish, avaricious man.

That which is true of avarice is also true of pride and

vanity. There is but one central faculty around which any man can afford to form his character, and that is the one of which I have already spoken—the great warming, radiating center of benevolence.

Now the end and aim of the gospel, like the end and aim of the Old Testament Scriptures (for they run on in continuous lines, the only difference between the Old Testament and the New being that the New is but an extension of the Old: the Old was the stem, the stalk, and the leaves, and the New is simply the blossom coming out of the Old, and the consummation of it)—the end and aim of the gospel is righteousness; or, if we drop the theological phrase, it is rightness of life. And what is that but character? The end and aim of the gospel is the formation in men of characters that shall affiliate them to God, and make them like God.

This has been regarded by some, in later days, as a new gospel. It has been regarded as a new-fangled notion. When it is preached that Christian manhood is that which every man should seek,—that Christian manhood should be the key-note of practical theology,—many flare up and declare that it is abandoning the old way of the fathers, and destroying the doctrines of Christ. Paul would not have known such men. It is doubtful who Paul would have known in these days, or who would know Paul if he were to come back to earth.

I am anxious that this central thought should be brought to the minds of all serious, earnest, conscientious Christian men, and that they should make no mistake.

If you will take notice of the teachings of the Lord Jesus Christ, you will find many marked points of difference between his teaching and ours. He never dealt in any philosophical teaching: he dealt in the intuitions. The teaching of our Saviour was not theological. It was supremely, though not exclusively, directed to the formation in men of what he technically called "The kingdom of God." "The kingdom of God is in you." "Thou art not far from the kingdom of God." "How hardly shall they that have riches enter into the kingdom of God." That Oriental figure of the kingdom, which is interpreted elsewhere in the New Testament,

we learn is that state of mind and character in which we are like God. In other words, it is the state of holiness. Christ taught that the supreme object of life was the establishing in men of this character or kingdom of holiness.

You may take the Sermon on the Mount, and go through it, and you will not be able to point out to me one word as to the evidence of the existence of God; nor one technical word as to the attributes; nor one word on the subject of moral government; nor one word as to natural ability or inability; nor one word as to free agency or fatalism; nor one word as to election, decrees, fore-ordination, and reprobation. From this immortal sermon of Christ's on the Mount, you never would suspect what has been taught for thousands of years as the sum of the gospel. Not that I undertake to say of any of these doctrines that they may not be in certain philosophical relations true: I undertake to say simply this, that it was not in such forms nor for such purposes that the Sermon on the Mount was delivered. It was a personal teaching of men how to become like God. Its object was to teach them how to become Christians; to teach them what to avoid, and what to take on; what not to do, and what to do; what they should not be, and what they should be.

You will recollect the occasion when the mother of Zebedee's children (his name is given, but hers is not: men had not then got along so far in this matter of the sexes as they now have) brought James and John to Christ, and asked that they might sit, one on his right hand and the other on his left, in his kingdom. She did this, thinking that before long there would be a real civil kingdom over which he would reign. He turned to them, and said, "Are ye able to drink of the cup that I shall drink of, and to be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with"? They, quite unconscious of what he meant by the baptism and by the cup, replied, "We are able." Were they so? Had they gone through that experience of soul which made them love others as themselves? Were they not on an errand of selfishness? Were they not aiming at dispossessing others? Were they not trying to get ahead of their own brethren at this very time? And yet, when Jesus put to them the

question as to whether they could go through that discipline which was necessary to elevation in his kingdom, they promptly answered, "Yes."

But what was the thought of Christ in this matter? It was, evidently, that what in the providence and grace of God men get in this world is that which constitutes in them the new kingdom—Christian character, or a higher, better, more perfect manhood. The apostle followed in precisely the same path, when he said, "The kingdom of God is not meat and drink"—the kingdom of God, in the New Testament, meaning everywhere either individual character or the collective character which comes from bringing together men that are individually perfect. The kingdom of God does not consist in ordinances, and methods, and such things—not at all. We are told by our Master that the kingdom of God is within us; and the apostle interprets it by saying that it is "righteousness" [that is, rectitude, right-living], "and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost." These were estates of character or of heart.

You will find, in the 13th chapter of first Corinthians, a wonderful description, from which doctrine is mostly absent, and in which the central light of Christian experience is set forth in colors which never came from any other palette than that of the apostle. He there shows that love is the great central principle of the universe. You will find, throughout both the gospel and the epistles, that, whatever discussion took place, the final result was, how to build people up into perfect men in Christ Jesus. In one passage—and it is the only one that I remember—the apostle Paul was asking what the church was for, what apostles were for, what prophets were for, what teachers were for, what workers of miracles were for, what the whole apparatus of Christian life was for; and the conclusion to which he came was, that they were to be employed in bringing men, in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ. There is a *measure of manhood:* Jesus Christ, reproduced in our feelings and in our lives. That is

Christianity, or Christ's manhood in us. Paul says, that the end of all service in the church is,

"That we henceforth be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive; but speaking the truth in love, may grow up into him in all things, which is the head, even Christ: from whom the whole body fitly joined together and compacted by that which every joint supplieth, according to the effectual working in the measure of every part, maketh increase of the body unto the edifying of itself in love."

That is the apostle's exemplification. The whole drift of religion is toward the building of men up into a better manhood than you can get by nature, or by the ordinary influences of society. It is a manhood in which the disinterested love of God is the central feature. I declare to you, that the whole gospel, the whole gracious provision of God in time for the salvation of the world, is directed to the production of that Christian manhood in this life which shall make men the representatives of God, as children are the representatives of their fathers. Such is the doctrine.

Many seem to think that Christianity consists in certain very sweet experiences. I say that Christianity consists of everything that there is in you. No man can be perfect outside of the line of God's creation. When God created you, he created you with a body; and if you are perfect men, that body must have a relation to your perfection. You cannot be perfect without a healthy and sound body. God, who made the reasoning faculty, made also the physical organs of the body. God, who made digestion, made the liver also. God, who made the mind to act under the influence of the bodily organs, made these organs, which are indispensable to the perfection of the mind in this lower mortal state. Although what we call *perfection of character* may exist in individuals whose bodies are more or less depraved, yet no individual is absolutely perfect whose body is not perfect. The typical man is one in whom the various parts of the body, the appetites and passions, the reason, the social affections, and the moral sentiments, all harmonize, each working in proper subordination. It takes the whole being, molded according to the divine conception, to make a typical

Christian man. I do not say that a man who is born paralyzed cannot go to heaven, but I do say that he is no more a typical representation of a Christian man than he is a typical representation of Hercules. I do not say that a person who is sick cannot be a good Christian; but I do say, that he cannot represent the highest and best state of Christianity. I look upon religion, not merely as that selfish thing which will enable all sorts of souls to scrape through it, and go to heaven (singed or unsinged) as it were by fire, thus saving the whole vagabond crew: Christianity is that which makes the body honorable, the reason divine, and the moral sense luminous and sweet. It is that which infuses into life the blessings of love. It strengthens every affection, making the higher faculties dominant over the passions, and the whole body pure, fresh, and healthy. The man who is first a man in body, and then a man in affection, and then a man in reason, and then a man in moral experience—his spirit in all these stages being inspired by the Spirit of God—is a typical man. Although less than this will be accepted as a Christian man, you must not take any of these poor driveling homunculi and say that they are full Christians. No distorted man is a Christian, in the larger sense of that term, although he may be a Christian in the sense in which the term is ordinarily used. God, who gave the gospel, is attempting to make large men out of small men; healthy men out of sick men; sweet men out of sour and bitter men: and the typical Christian is the man in whom every part is perfectly organized, healthy, and in harmonious relations and perfect subordination to the great dominant element of love. That is the character which I hold up as a true Christian character.

Now, since this is the generic idea, it relieves us from many notions about science, and about an apparently imperfect theology. Science has brought many discoveries; it has revealed many things that were not known before; it has shown many combinations that were not provided for in the teaching of the church: and men say, "Where is your Christianity? A new era is coming up. New spiritual developments are being made. Science is giving us larger views of the

government of God. We are going to have a new scientific religion. Some old church fancies are going to be dispossessed." But none will be dispossessed which the church ought to hold; for Christianity is not merely this, that, and the other thing: it is perfected manhood.

Now, nothing can come in the form of knowledge, nothing can come in the form of new methods of life, nothing can come that in coming makes a man better, which was not contemplated in the original design of Christianity. When Paul had been writing to the Philippian Church, he comprehensively summed up the whole, thus:

"Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true [not just those things which you know to be true, not just those things that will be known five or six years hence, not just those things which the church holds to be orthodox, but whatsoever things, in all time and forever, are included in the divine idea of Christ, and so of Christian manhood], whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report [that is, whatsoever things are estimable among men, whatsoever things men praise]; if there be any virtue, if there be any praise, think on these things [ponder them; talk them over; make them your own]."

Christianity is not a thing of exact terms. It is not like a crystal, five-sided, with sharp angles, that never grows any larger. It includes in it everything that can come to men in all ages. And when you show me new adjustments, new combinations, discoveries of any kind, I hail them as a part of Christianity; for Christianity is not simply what was known among men when Christ lived. Whatever is brought to light in any age of the world belongs to Christianity, and so belongs to me. It is mine, because it belongs to that root notion which is contained in the gospels, and for which the Church has existed ever since it was established.

Now, what are the means by which men come to this character? First, and above all, in point of time, in point of power, and in point of importance, is Divine help. The first and most important step toward educating a young man is that he should be well born. After that, the most important of educating institutions are the father and mother. They are primary, both as to time, and as to access to the mind of the child. There is no such power on the young as

that which acts from parental love. And the Divine Spirit is primary in man's spiritual development. It is the first and universally indispensable element in the unfolding of the human mind into anything like rectitude of life, spirituality of nature, or Christian character. I do not insist any longer upon the distinction which was formerly made, as to the general and the special influences of the Spirit. I believe that the Divine Spirit is at work in every part of that man's nature who is to be immortal. Man is an animal, working up from the lowest state toward the highest condition; and the Spirit of God is universal, working among the heathen, as well as among Christians, among the uncivilized, the semi-civilized and the civilized; and with all men there is that brooding heart of God without which all attempts to go upward would be faint. Although there are schools, and civil governments, and religious institutes, these would be utterly unable to carry men up against the fatal attractions which tend to draw them back to the earth from which they came, if it were not for the counter-inspiration from the life of God—that universal influence which, shining down on men, falls into the soul-darkness, which has hitherto comprehended it not, with such illuminating power that it is now not only comprehended but appropriated.

I will not be misunderstood on this point, because some of the remarks which I am going to make turn on it. Let no man say that I preach the doctrine of Christian manhood, and therefore exclude the Divine efficiency. There would not be the slightest hope for man, if it were not for the Divine existence; but is it necessary to be forever repeating that? If a man does not believe it, but wants to keep up a show of faith in it, then he may need to keep repeating it; but if God gives his Spirit to a man, he does not need to be talking about it all the while; he will be conscious that he cannot do anything without God's help. "You must look to God:" "Do not rely upon your own desert:" "Depend on God"—such exhortations men do not need who really have faith in the efficiency of the Divine Spirit. For a Christian man to be calling them to mind perpetually is as if I, want-

ing to know whether my watch were going or not, should stop it. Is that the way?

First, middle, last, and altogether, the great moving power of human life is the inspiration of the Divine Spirit; and it is universal, whether men take it or not. It is not any the less true that the sun pours down its warmth on the rock because the hermit in the cave beneath does not feel it. Because you shut your doors and blinds, and your roof is slated, and the light of the sun is kept out, it is not any the less true that it exists and knocks for entrance at every lattice and door all through the day, saying, "I am here: let me in." The light is there, though it is shut out.

The stimulating influence of the Divine Spirit is universal; it seeks an entrance into every soul; and it becomes special, when it becomes personal: but the appropriation of the Spirit is your part.

The sun comes down in the morning, and shines everywhere; but you never would see the sun in the meadow, making daisies, and coreopses, and violets, and other flowers, unless you went there. It pours itself abroad, and warms the roots, and develops the stems and leaves and blossoms; but, in order to see the special ways in which it acts, you must go where these things are taking place.

Now, a man's mind is made so that, when the divine influence strikes it, it tends by its nature to develop into higher forms: but it cannot do this without God; nor can the Divine Spirit do it, except miraculously, without the human organization which he has provided. Such is the state of things which exists in accordance with the decree of God, that human volition must work with the divine influence in order that the effect which was designed by man's creation may be produced.

You cannot have a philosophical formula that shall state this better than the New Testament has stated it—both sides of it.

"Work out your own salvation."

"Just what I thought," say men: "teaching folks morality; encouraging them to rely on themselves."

"Work out your own salvation, with fear and trembling."

"Ah! Yes. There it is. Sentiment; gush; teaching men to work out their own salvation with fear and trembling —by emotion. Leaving out entirely the old staple doctrine."

We are to work out our own salvation with fear and trembling, as men who tremble when they see that they have almost perfected a bargain by which they are to come into the possession of invaluable treasures. We are to work out our own salvation—our manhood in Christ Jesus—with a solicitude and earnestness which will make us tremble.

"Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling, for it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure."

There you have it all round.

In the first place, it is objected to the statement, that the object to be gained by conversion and religious training is the production in this world of that higher form and type of character which is called Christian manhood—it is objected to this view, that it makes salvation dependent on man's excellence, and not on grace. It is said, "If men are going to be saved because they have an excellent character, then there is no grace." Does that follow? Suppose sovereign grace determines to save men and adopts excellent character as the means, who shall dare to say, "That is not done as I think it ought to be done, and therefore it is not done right"? If it pleases God to save men by inoculating them with his own character, and bringing them into such conditions as that they are worth saving; if it pleases God to prepare men for heaven by developing in them a character which shall fit them to be happy there,—then do I set aside sovereign grace when I tell the way in which it works?

It is said, further, "This is a new-fangled notion. It is not the safe teaching of our fathers." More the pity for our fathers, then. But let us consider this talk about its being new-fangled. *New-fangled* is a contemptuous expression used to vilify men who suppose that they know more than their fathers did. Now, a man who does not know more than his father has no business to be born. It is the business of the generation that goes before to do its work, and to leave the generation that is to come

after higher than it otherwise would be; and if the men of any age do not know more than their fathers did, they have become degenerate, or their fathers were not good workmen; and in either case, it is not for anybody to deride new light, new ideas, new discoveries. You have a right to say that whatever is new must be put to tests, subjected to proper philosophical examinations, and must not be adopted hastily. That is all right; but because a thing is new, or because it has advanced beyond the teachings of our fathers, is no presumption that it is untrue. On the contrary it is in analogy with the developments of the Old Testament and the New Testament, and with the experience of the world in the progress of civilization. In everything there is advancement; the New takes the place of the Old; and this notion is not new-fangled. There are certain great staple truths that I believe will never receive much illumination. There are many elements in theology which lie so far beyond the sphere of observation and positive cognition, that, though theologians have dwelt much on them (thanks to the perversion of the Greek mind), we shall never know much about them. Paul was modest in his estimate of his own knowledge. Though he had been in the seventh heaven, and learned things which it was impossible to utter, and though he had been forty years a teacher and a preacher, yet he said, at the end of his life, in regard to the nature of God, and the government of God, and the eternity of things, that he only saw them dimly. If he had looked through modern theological spectacles, he would have seen them clearly, so that he could have explained them fully; but, being modest, he said:

"When I was a child, I spake as a child, I understood as a child, I thought as a child; but when I became a man I put away childish things."

In respect to eternity, he was like a child. It was only when he should arrive at his manhood in heaven, that he should look back and see how little he knew upon earth.

He was not fit to be a theologian, because he admitted that he did not know everything. He said:

"We know in part, and we prophesy [teach] in part [that is, fragmentarily—imperfectly]."

Then he went on to say:

"But when that which is perfect is come, then that which is in part shall be done away." "Then shall we know, even as also we are known."

The greater comprehends the less; but the less does not comprehend the greater, by any means.

And now he speaks of three gifts which abide. Teaching, prophecy, miracles—these are relative to our earthly state, and are going to pass away; but there are three things that will continue on, and will not perish. What are they? Gush—no, I do not mean that: I mean faith, hope, love. The devil's disciples call them gush; but Paul, Christ's disciple, declared them to be immortal. The things which he declared that death should not touch were not reason, nor shining words of eloquence, nor prophecy and forelooking, but these emotions of the soul—faith, hope, and love, the greatest of them being love. To them is given the crown of immortality, while these other things fall back in the shadow of twilight.

It is said, also, that this view of religion which makes so much of the new manhood in Christ Jesus will tend to cultivate self-dependence, and not dependence on God. Yes, it will in speculators, but not in those who are grounded in the faith. I do not know that there is anything about which men dispute me more than about depravity. If I were a representative of a warring sect, I should hardly think myself a Christian if I did not fight this doctrine as it has generally been taught. The spirit of the Babe of Bethlehem has come to be scarcely known among us. We are to see an age when the power of Christianity shall be in love, and not in fighting. Men will deny that man is depraved and weak, and will talk about his godlike qualities and various excellencies. I believe in them all; and, judged by what he started from, man is good; but, judged by the standard which he is aiming at, he is depraved.

Now, follow out the teaching of the Lord Jesus Christ in regard to Christian manhood. He says:

"Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you and persecute you."

Try that, and see whether you are sinful or not. Put on

the whole character which is set down for you in the New Testament. Nothing makes a man feel so weak, so imperfect, so utterly helpless, and so absolutely in instant need of succor, as the attempt to wear a single one of all the jewels in the crown of God. Take meekness. You might as well undertake to carry a taper in the face of a tornado as to undertake, amidst the bickerings and quarrelings and janglings of life, to govern your disposition by this quality. Humility is swamped at every step. The Christian graces are scarcely known as predominant elements of human character. Let any man undertake to build up in him, day by day, the comprehensive idea which I have given you of manhood in Christ, and he, of all men on earth, will feel the need of the power of the grace of God.

Well, there is another relation of this teaching. All Christendom is sighing for unity; and I suppose that little by little we are approaching it; but the mind is so full of illusions on this subject that it needs much explanation. The central view, that religion is a power which produces Christian manhood in men, is not consistent with the idea of outward unity. Organic unity is sought; but you cannot organize all the churches into one. The Greek Church and the Roman Church might come together; by mutual adjustments you might bring together the English Episcopal Church and the reformed Oriental Latin churches; but what kind of unity can you establish between the Quakers and the Roman Church? I should like to know how you could reconcile the freedom of the Congregational churches with those churches that have stringent forms of government. How are you going to bring together churches that differ as to their ideas of organization? You cannot do it, any more than you can bring civil governments together. How are you going to make the administration of the six New England States alike? What if a great convention at Worcester should attempt to make the duties of sheriffs and constables technically alike? So far from the laws in these six States being identical, they are widely different, adapting themselves to slight conveniences here and there; and, in the long run, this variation does no harm.

What if a convention of botanists should get together, and say, "We shall simplify the vegetable economy, if we can discover, by some alembic, what is the central principle of growth, and get everything to be just alike; we shall bring about a great improvement, if we can reduce all vegetables to one"? What if they should say, "It would be far better if there were no potatoes, no turnips, no beets, no carrots, no cabbages, no salsify, nothing but pumpkins"? And what if they should spend their time trying to transmute cabbages, beets, and all these other vegetables, into pumpkins? Talk about unity in the vegetable kingdom! Why, its diversity is its glory. Its variation is its richness. Variety is just what we want in the vegetable kingdom.

The same is true in regard to the sects; and yet, men go about as though they were born again in Bedlam, attempting to lay down some plans by which all the sects of Christendom shall be one sect. I would not give a snap for them, if they were one.

I should like to know how you would make an overture that was worth hearing if all the parts were just the same. The bass thunders at the bottom, the alto and the tenor sound in the middle, and the soprano is heard at the top. It is by the harmonization of all the notes and qualities of sound that you get majesty in music. The richness comes from the variety of the parts, and not from sameness.

The churches throughout the world are to take part in that universal anthem which is to sound through life and after death forevermore; and they are trying to do it by teaching everybody to sing on a monochord. But I say, sing in parts; let not the bass, nor the tenor, nor the soprano, nor the alto drown the other parts. Let them all move in harmony. The churches are well enough, if they will only work together. Let not the Presbyterian Church, nor the Congregational Church, nor the Baptist Church, nor the Methodist Church, nor the Episcopal Church undertake to lay down rules for its sister churches. Let each one have the method that it wants.

I do not go into your house to spy out your way of housekeeping. I should be indecent if I did. I mind my own

housekeeping; and I would not let you interfere with me in it. You have your way, and I mine.

Then, besides the particularity of each household, there is a large neighborhood sphere, in which each family is in sympathy with the others, though they differ in their ways of doing things. Let every family do things as it pleases. There can be no absolute pattern in this regard, any more than there can be an absolute pattern in regard to machines. There is no universal standard on which all machines must pattern themselves. There can be no unitizing of the Church of God in respect to organization; and still less can there be unity in God's Church with respect to worship.

In meetings, some men want to give expression to themselves; and some men who are not a whit less good do not want to speak, and are perfectly silent. Men differ in regard to veneration. I should die of inanition, if I could not express myself through veneration; but some men put aside veneration as foreign to them. With them, the development of social life is worship.

You cannot make all men just alike. Their tastes differ. You love vinegar, and I love molasses. You love rice, and I would eat rice straw just as soon as rice. Every man has his own taste, and there is no disputing about tastes.

So it is in regard to Christian worship. Every man has his preference as to the mode of worshiping; and his choice turns on the way in which his mind is set. It depends upon where his hunger is. Some men's hunger is in ideality, and leads them to prefer organized forms of worship. Other men are factual in their tendencies, and they do not take to "moonshine" as they call ideality. I like the Episcopal worship. There is something in it that takes hold of me. I like the Methodist worship. There is something in that which finds a response in me. I like the tendency to intellectualism which there is in the Presbyterian worship. There is something in me that responds to that. There are various wants in the human mind, and in the church provision should be made for them all, and not for one or two of them only.

Nor can you, by any common government, unite churches

together. Our ideas of government are as divergent as our ideas on any other point. But you will take notice how men come together in times of public excitement. You will take notice how, when there is a revival in a town or village, the Methodists, the Presbyterians, the Baptists, the Lutherans, and other denominations unite in the good work. You will notice how, as the interest in religion waxes warmer and warmer, and as the drunkards, gamblers, wicked men of every description are striving to reform, are becoming awakened, and are asking what they shall do to be saved—you will notice that then lines of distinction are rubbed out, and these are all brethren. The moment their hearts are touched, and they are lifted into higher experiences, unity takes place, without any endeavor, spontaneously—for unity is the result of elective affinity. The only unity which you can have in this world is that which you get by the tendency of moral qualities to run together. Where there is mutual regard and esteem, there will be unity. Church fellowship will exist where there is a predominance of higher feelings; and when men live in unity of the higher forms you cannot draw them away from each other. Love unites; and the spirit of selfishness disintegrates. Those are two primal laws.

There are many respects in which this view will apply, not simply to Christian churches, but to all religious institutions.

No religion ever remained from one generation to another whose basic principle was not the promotion of some common good. The foundation of every enduring religion must be laid in some principle that is common to all religious sects. Churches must be drawn toward some element of Christian character, toward some pattern of higher life, if they would be united.

I may say, that I see no reason why there should be any dividing line between the Jew and the Christian. The old darkness has passed away. The mediæval days are over. The name of the Jew, that used to be a by-word and a hissing, is dropping its habiliments of contempt. This free land, I believe, is the only place on the globe where the Jews feel themselves to be so permanently established, that they buy

real estate, and settle down, and mingle with the people, and become recognized citizens—and he who has ground under him strikes roots into it, and becomes a fixture.

Now, we are indebted to the Jews for that which is best among us. We have received from the old stock of Israel our highest notions of manhood; we have received from them our noblest conceptions of righteousness; all the world has gone to school to Judaism; and we are what we are, as men discerning right and wrong, and as men having unutterable aspirations for a higher manhood, by the Jewish Scripture, and the old Jewish influences. The Jews have come among us, and we turn and say to them, "That which was born with you, and ripened and made effulgent by the presence of one of your own men, descended through the loins of the patriarch David, Jesus, our Saviour, and your countryman, has rounded out, and given to the world, in resplendent and perfect form, the conception which lingered, dawned, shone, but did not come to its noonday brightness, in the Old Testament." And I see nothing to prevent sympathy between the conscientious Jew and the Christian worship. I am not ashamed to say, that my heart yearns for my ancestors. I am not ashamed, laying reverent hands on the Old Testament, to say, that, but for that, I never should have had the New Testament. I think the world, which has trampled on the name of Jew, and despised it, and hated it, owes a debt of gratitude to the Hebrew stock which it does not to the Roman, nor to the Greek, nor to any Oriental nation.

I will not dwell longer on this subject, although I leave many things unsaid. There are, however, one or two points that I may press in closing. One is, that I see no hope for the future of the world until we divest this beautiful and central element of Christianity of all the figments and mistakes which have clustered about it, and make the power of true holiness in the individual man the vital power by which the world is to be transformed. The world is never going to be converted by church government. Nor is it going to be converted by theological reasoning. Not that I disesteem theological reasoning, nor that I would dispossess it; but it has not the power to convert the world.

But there is one thing that nobody can resist; there is one thing which is transcendently powerful everywhere; and that is the power of a perfectly radiant, tender, sweet, strong, beautiful character. Everybody bows down to that, and is submissive to it. Submissive? why, it is pleasant to me. Bring me your robed priest, and let him hold above me his scepter in his ringed hand, and pronounce his liturgies, claiming apostolic descent as his authorization, and saying, "I am God's authorized teacher: bow down to the authority that is in me." "Never!" I would say to him; "for I am a son of God as much as you; and I have as much authority as you"—not because I am a priest, but because I am a man; for God does not see in any dignitary on earth anything higher than the manhood that is in him. No king is higher than the manhood that is in him. No priest is higher than the manhood that is in him. Nothing is higher than the manhood in man. And I will bow down to no man that comes to me with mere logic, or ecclesiasticism, or ordinances: but bring to me a sensitive, strong soul—bring to me a Florence Nightingale; bring to me one whose power is tempered, whose soul is garlanded, whose nature is rich, and pours abroad its riches as does the sun, and I will make haste, I will run, to cast myself down, and say, "I am not worthy to unloose thy shoes' latchets." I will bow down to the beauty of holiness. That is my master; it is my love; it is my aspiration; it is the joy of my life.

The power of God's omnipotence—that is not the power which is going to convert the world. You are not going to do it by the voice of thunder, though it rend the rocks, nor by the lightning, nor by the earthquake. The moral power of love is the force which is to regenerate mankind. It is not going to be done by contributing a hundred dollars a year toward sending missionaries to the heathen, while you stay at home and go on cheating your neighbor. The power that is going to overturn selfishness is benevolence; the light that is going to cause unbelieving eyes to see, is the power which consists in the co-working of man with God. Thus, an irresistible force will be exerted through all the world for men's conversion and salvation. The beauty of your character is

that which must bring to a knowledge of the truth of Christ those who are around you, if they are brought to it at all. Ye that make religion homely, beware. Do you say, "I shall get my reward: it is true, I am not comely; I am grim and unlovely; I know boys and girls run away from me; but God knows me"? Yes, you will find out that he knows you! Suppose a man should forget his flesh, and walk in his bones through a room filled with people, and suppose, noticing their fear, he should say, "Oh, I have the substance and foundation of things in me, although I lack flesh and skin, and such minor matters"? Do you suppose that he would be capable of winning his way in society? You theological skeletons; you corpses that are walking among men, and thinking that you are Christians because you hold the right doctrines and keep yourselves aloof from your fellow men, and boasting of how much you know, and demanding that people shall bow down to you and look up to you, and pour out incense of praise to you, do you suppose that you are going to benefit this struggling race? Time is a womb, and men are striving to be born; and they come into the new life, if they come there at all, with cries of pain; and what we need is mother-care, nurse-care, and love-care. Until you can make men more beautiful, and women more beautiful, and churches more beautiful, you may despair of saving the world by spreading your meager, bare-boned Christianity. What we want, is God's love in men, and God's beauty in women. Under the influence of these qualities, the soul is irresistibly and almost instantly drawn heavenward.

There is no medicine like that of soul on soul; and so, when the child was dead, and the prophet wanted to heal him, he stretched himself on the child, with his eyes on the child's eyes, with his mouth on the child's mouth, with his face on the child's face; and the child came to life. It was the touch of the prophet that healed the child. And when Christ would heal men that were sent to him, he laid his hands on them and recognized them as his fellows. Even those that were most desperately wicked, he allowed to sit down and eat with him. The harlot, the drunkard, and such as these, he did not turn away from him. By his pres-

ence he healed them. It was the touch of Christ that made him so powerful with the common people. And if we are to save men, it must be by following his example. He that does save men by loving them, and by bringing his heart into contact with theirs, is a true representative of Christ, and so a true minister.

PRAYER BEFORE THE SERMON.

Our heavenly Father, we thank thee that we are not left to decipher what thou art through the dim light of this material world. Out of our own souls thou hast instructed us, and out of the experience of the blessed sense of happy memory in days long past, thou hast collected the record of the experience which thou hast wrought in them; and it is a light to us, to cheer, to instruct, to hope and comfort.

And now we believe that thou art not the mighty thunderer, nor the God of fate, nor irresistible chance, nor an all-consuming will. Though thou art sovereign, thine is the sovereignty of love. Though thou consultest none, it is because with infinite fullness thou dost pour out abundantly upon all the wisdom which they would bring to thee.

O Lord our God, we rejoice that thou hast called thyself Father, and Friend, and Elder Brother, and Redeemer, and Saviour and Lover; for in all these terms we find an interpreted experience of our own; and we take the purest and the best thoughts and feelings of the household in our best hours, and from them gather some thought of what thou art, lifted infinitely above the experience of men. In truth, more pure and absolute than men can be; in love, infinitely more rich, more tender, more self-sacrificing, thou dost teach us how to love. But what, then, must be the Teacher. Thou dost teach souls that are drawn together what affection is; but what must be the drawing of thy soul when thou thyself dost arouse thine heart, and with outspread love look upon the whole world, drawing it toward thee in kindness and sympathy! O Lord, we rejoice that thou art not an avenging God, cruel as despots are; we rejoice that thou art as a father beholding wrong in the child, and loving him so much that he cannot afford that he should go wrong, and with the rod chastising him, that he may become purer, better, and more lovely. Thy judgments and thy penalties are not fulminated in wrath, but are administered in mercy and goodness. Whom the

Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth.

Grant, then, that we may lift ourselves up into the conception of thy greatness, the glory of thy nature, and the love of thy heart and soul. Grant that, while we admire thy power and thy wisdom, we may love thy love; and that we may be drawn to thee by confidence. By ten thousand assurances, thou hast made it easy for us to come to thee. Thou hast commanded us to lay aside that reverence which hinders, and that fear which restrains, us from coming to thee. We are commanded to come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need. This is the very time. Our need is upon us—the need of faith to see more than that brute life which is round about us; the need of beholding the invisible, that we may cheer and nourish this mortal life with all its apprehensions, and all its beckonings and promises. We need forgiveness. We need not that wrath should be quenched, but that love should be inflamed. We are grieved that we have offended thee, and we ask for a reconciliation which shall lift us beyond the necessity of sinning, and grieving our best and only true Friend.

We beseech thee that thou wilt grant to every one in thy presence, as the highest possession possible, the riches of faith in God through Christ Jesus our Lord. Oh, that every one might feel how rich he is in God! Oh, that every one might be able to call God his Father! Oh, that each one might now, with manly experience, repeat heartily that which was taught him in his childhood, and say, Our Father! Dost thou own us, Lord God, that own thee! Thou art ours; and what have we in heaven or on earth that is to us such a treasure, such a refuge, such a present help in time of trouble, such patience, such fidelity, such tenderness, such a Master of joy, as thou art.

We beseech thee, O Lord our God, to grant that every one in thy presence who stands to-day in any peculiar relation, or needs any peculiar grace, may be able to ask that which he needs of God, who gives liberally, and who upbraideth not.

Remember all the little children, and bless them from the morning hour; and may they be taught the way to Christ. From the beginning may they trust in him; and may they grow up to heroism, and to all manliness in grace. Bless, we pray thee, the youth that are beginning with promise, and hope, and gayety, and joy. Oh, that their joy may never be less! May they so fix their affection upon God, and take their ideal of right and wrong from what thou hast made known in thy word, that they shall be able to walk the way of righteousness, which is the path of peace. And with gladness may they look upon religion as beautiful, and understand the beauty of holiness.

We pray for those who stand in the midst of life bearing its burdens and cares and trials. May they have that manly trust which overcomes all troubles, and sustains the soul under cares and trials and burdens. May no one be willing to fall down defeated by his circumstances. May every one have such a thought of the man-

hood which is his own, and of the strength which has been vouchsafed to him by Almighty God, that he shall be able, having done all, to stand.

We pray for the aged, that their last days may be benign, and that they may be more and more warmed by the approaching summer, and made more and more bright by a drawing near of the heavenly luster. And at the last, grant that they may go from glory to glory.

We beseech thee to bless us in our several relations. Grant that they who are brought together here from different directions, and with varied experiences, with one common end and interest and with one common hope, may have to-day common joy and common instruction, and that we may be led on and up in the right way.

Bless this neighborhood, and the church that is here. Bless all the churches in the region round about. Bless the homes represented by those that are gathered together here.

Bless our whole land. Make this Emmanuel's land. And may there at last arise a nation of great power which shall use its might for justice, and in behalf of the weak, and not against them.

We pray for all the nations of the globe. Is it not time for thy blood to work, thou Sacrifice for the world? Oh, wilt thou not rebuke any nations that to-day oppress thy children. Wilt thou not gather together by their affinities and sweet affections those who are bound together only by fear and despotism.

Let thy kingdom come, and thy will be done upon earth as it is in heaven. And to the Father, the Son, and the Spirit shall be praises everlasting. *Amen.*

PRAYER AFTER THE SERMON.

Our Father, we pray for forgiveness that we so indifferently speak of thee; that our life is so barren; that we cannot gather in ourselves enough of the higher spiritual qualities to represent thy life, which is represented in Jesus. O blessed Jesus, from whose example we learn to love, forgive us that we follow that example so poorly. We are trying, O Lord Jesus, to make ourselves worthy of thy compassion. Teach us to know that thou hast compassion upon all who are in need. We are tempted to push the battle with sword and trumpet; teach us to promote peace and good will among men. Oh, for divine love among men and in men!

Bring thy kingdom forward, we beseech thee—that kingdom in which dwells righteousness. Lord Jesus Christ, come and reign King of kings and Lord of lords. And when we shall see thee as thou art, being ourselves transformed into thy perfect image, we will cast our crowns before thy feet, and say, Not unto us, not unto us, but unto thy name be the praise of our salvation, forever and forever. *Amen.*

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